

DEFINITION OF ARTISTIC AND NONARTISTIC APPEALS

When Aristotle was teaching about rhetoric, he wanted his pupils to be clear on what was a part of rhetoric and what was not. Rhetoric was an inventive art for him. It was best suited to finding the means that would move an audience. It was an art of finding and making arguments.

Aristotle recognized that in matters of dispute, arguments are not the only means of resolution. Sometimes, for example, the evidence itself can be so compelling that rhetorical proofs are secondary.

He called the proofs developed by rhetorical methods ARTISTIC and the proofs that were given by the situation and its facts NONARTISTIC. Both were sources of persuasion, but rhetoric as an ART was concerned only with developing artistic proofs.

For example, if you think you have received the wrong change at Publix, it is a simple matter for you to demonstrate that this is so. Add the change you received to the computer total. That should equate the money you originally gave the clerk. If it is less, you were shortchanged. A bit of simple arithmetic makes the point. If an accused thief pleads guilty, there is no need for rhetoric appeals to show there was motive opportunity, ability, and the like. No proof must be invented. There is proof enough in the nonartistic admission.

Whenever the facts "speak for themselves," we have sufficient grounds to make a decision without rhetoric. The facts do not require artistry when they are clear and compelling. Yet they can be persuasive nonetheless. Rhetoric is needed at times when and in cases where the facts

don't speak for themselves. When the facts are ambiguous, conflicting, incomplete, inconclusive, and yet a decision or action is called for, we turn to rhetoric to create proofs that will allow us to form a judgment. These are ARTISTIC proofs, and their discovery and development are the proper concern of rhetoric.

Aristotle made an additional point that is also important for understanding what rhetorical proofs do and do not include. He recognized that in a given case there may be factors quite apart from the message presented that influence the audience.

For the most part these are the constraints present in a rhetoric situation. They should be taken into account to the extent the rhetor can. But their relevance for judgments based on artistic arguments is limited to what is expressed and how it is expressed in the actual rhetorical performance. Rhetors sometimes overlook such constraints or fail to discover means to compensate for or exploit them. Thus, they may enter as nonartistic influences on an audience's assessment.

Be that as it may, Aristotle's point was that the ART of rhetoric is focused on what IN THE MESSAGE ITSELF, quite apart from attending influences, brings listeners and readers to the point where they are ready to form a judgment.

Aristotle's point is valid today, even though contemporary thought might disagree that the facts speak entirely for themselves. There is no denying that in an age of science, factual data can be compelling. Even more so today, responsible rhetoric requires that the facts be known and be used as evidence to support our claims. But at the same time, we must remember that rhetoric does NOT invent the facts; it DOES invent arguments that interpret the facts to give them meaning.

This inventing of arguments and their articulation in a rhetorical transaction is the proper subject of ART.

(Introduction the Rhetoric Theory by Gerard Hauser, Pg. 72)

In Book I, Chapter 2 of The Rhetoric, Aristotle identifies three technical or artistic proofs called *entechnoi pisteis*, which make up the *techne* or ART of rhetoric.

He also identifies several *atechnoi pisteis*, INARTISTIC proofs consisting of things such as documents of "testimony obtained under torture".

These may be useful in arguing, but they are not part of the study of rhetoric.

The three artistic proofs (proofs taught specifically by the art of rhetoric) are:

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| 1. <i>logos</i> | logical reasoning |
| 2. <i>pathos</i> | names and causes of various human emotions |
| 3. <i>ethos</i> | human character and goodness |

(This may come from Herrick pg 86)